Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701

4/16/69

Dear Sylvia,

I've delayed answering your very kind letter of the 14th until the last of today's mail because I do not know how to answer it. I'll think out loud, perhaps that will help you understand my dilemma.

One of the few assets on which I can capitalize in order to publish my books is the literary value of their content. Frankly, although I still go through the motions, I am not at all hopeful of commercial publication, unless I again make a real success of a private printing, when I might again hope for reprinting - and screwing - by whores like Dell.

Right now this material is under active consideration by a very convervative publisher, with a favorable recommendation by the man he assigned to read it. Another publication says it wants to go over it. While I have had enough experience not to be hopeful, dare I throw the opportunity away by taking the edge off? I believe any magazine article giving the essence of the content would kill collateral rights.

On the other side, I also want the material to be known. If this is accomplished in a small publication, like "Minority of One" was, it lets those few of us close to the subject know about it, but it doesn't do an awful lot more. On the other hand, if it goes into a magazine with a substantial circulation, they would pay enough to help materially with publication of the book. The largest pay enough to make it possible.

As I have been thinking about your letter, a possible compromise occured. Let me see what you think abiut it. When we spoke about this by phone, you suggested an article in the "New York Review of Books". They are essentially a literary publication. Therefore, why not do an article, assuming their willingness, on the practical impossibility of getting commercial publication for any serious work basically in disagreement with the official account of the President's murder and what this means to the country and says of the society - and publishing and publishers. The only two critical books of which I know that can be considered at all serious that did not have this trouble are Epstein's and Lopkin's, both of which concede the basic official assumption, Oswald's guilt. Thompson rehashed. You know your own experience. Lane's was a fluke, fed back by a British publisher after he had dispaired in the U.S., and actually arranged by an editor for a house in New York that rejected the book, as they had mine before it. Dell and Dial turned WHITEWASH down three times before coming to me for it after I made a success of it. They turned WHITEWASH II down in October 1966, or September, possibly, then came back for it in December of January, after they saw how WHITEWASH took off. You can have access to my rather extensive publisher files, for use of letters (without signatures), tox illustrate thatxin <u>not a single case was the decision editorial</u>! Also for this purpose you can make general reference to what the books prove (and I include COUP D'ETAT, of which I was today told a successful copy has been made by microfilm and I'll soon have it for you), with a few of the less merchantable documents to be used as part of the piece. I think it is possible to find those that I might not be able to sell that are still pretty hot and not generally known. You will thus be saying both things, that there is this newx

material that is significant- that is enough to put people in jail - and it cannot be published commercially, and why it cannot be published. I think such a piece could be a material addition to the literature. Lane failed miserably by lying and manufacturing. While I cannot estimate the attitude of the magazine, I think it is appropriate for such a publication. And I think that if we can get together and discuss this, I can give you enough to accomplish your purpose while protecting the possibility I want to protect.

This, however, ought not be a real short piece, as you suggest; yet I do not propose a Popkin-length treatise, unless they should want it. There is little problem reaching that length. It isn't necessary.

Offhand, I think we could use proof of the perjury, which should make it hot enough for NYRB and might get them the news attention all magazines want. I can add to this, forexample, with what Perry told me (he did let me interview him, though not on tape, and he told me how he knows the President was shot in the back, not the neck, about two inches down).

When we spoke earlier, I had hoped you might be able to come down during the Easter holidays. Then I could have let you see more. I do have more. I think the third I have yet to write may be even more significant, even more destructive of the integrities involved, and the false official posture.

My purpose is not selfishness, for I have given others access to what I have. I gave New Orleans what was pretty well used on Finck, and permission to those lawyers to use what of the material they considered necessary (the reason for the initial limited edition, to establish and protect my rights). I let you, Cyril and others know immediately what I had. I have been offering him access to other of my unknown material for more than a year. He just hasn't taken time to look at it. While I have refused John Nichols permission to use some of what I showed him in confidence long ago in his writing, I am, without his even asking for it, making other unknown material available to him for purposes of his suit.

There are further complications I cannot here go into. They may all add up to nothing, but I have a number of unofficial contacts established. I am in correspondence with a number of new people and the door is not really closed on me. These are political rather than publishing people. While there is no reason to draw great encouragement from it, today I got a meaningful letter from Burke Marshall, who has refused to reply for more than a year. In it he provided a basis for responding that may lead to a dialogue. Something similar at the Department of Justice. Five days ago, what Lane killed with that horror on the "too many guns" opened up with a different person. One formerly close to Kennedy sent me word he is accepting my invitation and is coming to see me. These are not publishing possibilities, will not yield me money, but they may be the kind of opening that may do more than anything else to accomplish our purposes.

My wife had to work after the end of the tax period to finish up some last-minute delinquents. So, I got the mail at the postoffice this morning and when I go in to pick her up, will mail this. It forces haste upon me also, and I hope I have been clear. I'd like to think about it longer, not just say no, though that is my feeling at the moment, chiefly on the basis this would ruin my chance of financing the book. I do appreciate the offer very much and the many unusual additions that are so kind and unselfish. And I cherish some of the writing in the proposed foreword...Do you think the NYRB suggestion possible? Can you speak to them?

Sincerely,